

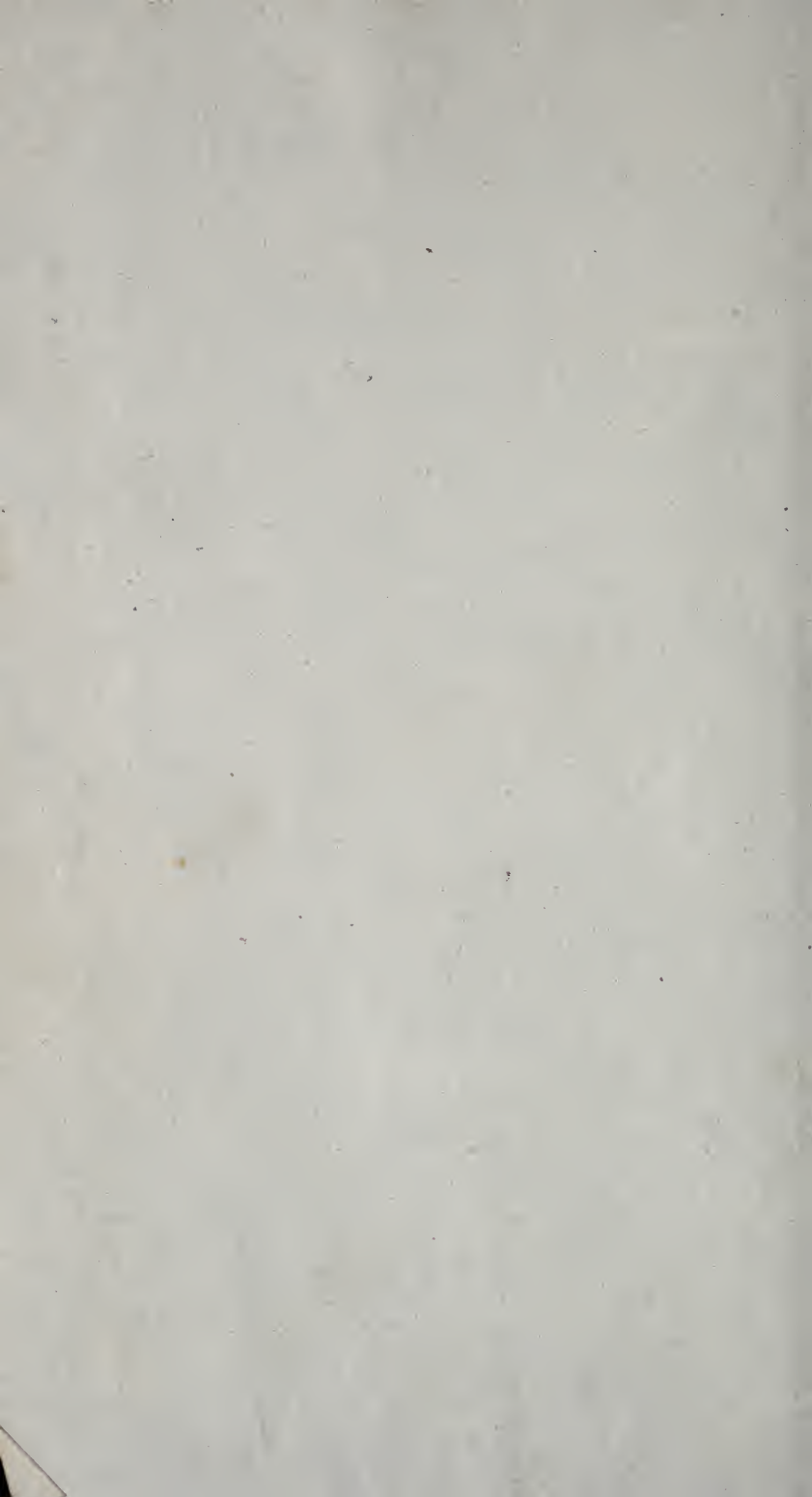
To

A. E. Chamberlain

Windsor Farm

Harford

Oct 1886.





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THE BLIND MAN AND HIS SON.

Page, 5.

THE
BLIND MAN AND HIS SON,

A TALE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE FOUR FRIENDS:

A FABLE.

AND

A WORD FOR THE GIPSIES.

The profits arising from the sale of this publication will be applied in aid of the Society for the relief of Aged Females in Sheffield.



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TO

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

DEAR FRIEND,

IN dedicating this trivial performance to you, I am seeking to confer on it a degree of importance which it might not otherwise possess. It may be presumed, that a work written by the friend of MONTGOMERY, and dedicated, by permission, to him, has at least the sanction of his approbation, and that it therefore cannot be totally devoid of merit. My readers will be the more strengthened in this belief, when they are informed that

it is to you that the work owes its existence. You desired me to do two things : —in the first place to write a TRACT ; and in the second, to write something which should transmit my name down to posterity. In compliance with your first request, I have written the Tale of ‘ *The blind Man and his Son*,’ as here presented to the public. Before I had finished it, however, I discovered that it would not do for a TRACT : no sect would publish, or circulate it. It inculcates no *peculiar* religious tenets, but simple Christianity only ; enforcing, as its primary objects, universal love to God, and unbounded charity to man. It is designed to shew the blessed effects of Christianity on the hearts and lives of all those who practise

it, whatever their stations in life, or their peculiar sentiments may be.

In answer to your second request, I have written the Fable of '*The Swan and the Rabbit*,' the import of which, I dare say, will not be misunderstood.

In addition to these, I have inserted the Fable of '*The Four Friends*,' (likewise written at your suggestion) with your own Sequel, &c. to it. The latter cannot fail to attract the attention of the public, as exhibiting you in that easy dishabille, and amiable playfulness, in which grave authors are seldom publicly seen ; but which, perhaps, serve to display their genuine characters better than a

fuller dress, or a more dignified demeanour. I have the happiness of subscribing myself, with the greatest sincerity,

your obliged friend,

and obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

THE

SWAN AND THE RABBIT.

A FABLE.

A POOR little solitary Rabbit had, by some means, been left upon a small desert island in the midst of an extensive lake, where the scanty herbage which grew between the stones was scarcely sufficient to sustain nature; whilst, on the shore surrounding the waters, there appeared to be abundance of the richest food. A noble Swan sailed majestically upon the lake, catching plenty of fish, visiting, at pleasure, the fruitful margin, and sometimes coasting the rocky island, on which the poor little Rabbit was a starving prisoner. One day, whilst the latter was mournfully seated upon the rugged beach,

and was looking with a wishful eye towards the land of plenty, the Swan as he sailed along lay upon his oars, and advised him by all means to leave the barren rock, and go to the main land, where he would find herbage in abundance. The tears started in the eyes of the poor little sufferer, as he exclaimed, "I should indeed, Mr. Swan, be very glad to follow your advice; and, but for one little impediment, I would do so immediately, I have not the *power* of going; such poor helpless things as I am, must be content to stay nearer home, however homely that home may be. *You* can do as you please; you have wings with which to mount into the air; you can glide upon the surface of the water, nay, you can dive down into the depths beneath; you can make yourself heard at a distance, and you can charm the ear with your song even at the hour of death. I can neither fly, nor swim, nor dive. I have no voice to make myself heard to the shore, nor any music in me to charm the listening ear. Unpitied, unnoticed, and unknown,

here must I live, and, in a very few days, here must I, in all probability, die.”

The Swan was affected with the sorrowful complaint of the poor Rabbit, and hanging his head, and drooping his wings, he pressed his downy breast against the projecting rock on which the desponding creature sat. A sudden thought struck the little animal, and in an instant it sprung upon the back of its noble friend. The Swan took the hint, and appeared proud of the confidence reposed in him. Gently and smoothly he sailed over the lake with his humble *protégé*, landing him in safety, and with a light heart, on that happy coast where he might pass the remainder of his days in peace and plenty, but which his own exertions could never have enabled him to reach.

THE

BLIND MAN AND HIS SON.

A TALE.

THE sun hung over Skiddaw, as in the afternoon of a pleasant day, in the month of August, 1814, a venerable looking blind man was led by a boy, about ten years of age, down the steep hill called Hurtlebank, in the North-riding of the county of York. A thick and snow-white beard spread upon his breast, yet his countenance bore the marks of grief rather than of age, whilst an uncommon appearance of dignity distinguished his whole demeanour. His dress, though whole and clean, was plain and coarse. With his left hand he had hold of the boy; with his right he grasped a long

knotted staff, and a scrip hung over his shoulder, on his left side. The boy, who was a subject from which a painter might study health, grace, and elasticity, carried under his arm a pretty large bundle of small pamphlets, tied together with a piece of red tape. About half way down the hill they left the high road by a stile and footpath, which led through a small coppice, and then wound amongst heath, broom, furze, and fern, till it passed under high projecting rocks, enriched with moss and bushes. At length they came to a little level lawn, spread with fresh and soft verdure, and overhung to the east by a lofty crag, screened on the north and south by shrubs and forest trees, but open to the west, where it overlooked a deep sylvan glen, beyond which was seen an extensive park, abounding with wood and water, and in the midst of it appeared a spacious and magnificent chateau.

From the rock that rose high above the verdant terrace on which the old man and

the boy stood, fell a small clear stream into a bason scooped by art in the solid stone, from whence it again flowed, in a long broken cascade, into the valley below, where it joined a considerable river, seen by glimpses as it wound along the bottom. Beneath the projecting rock stood a stone slab, behind which was a rude, but easy and convenient bench. To this the boy led the old man, who taking off his scrip, laid it on the seat beside him.

The weather was warm, and the old man took off his large hat, which had before hid, in a great measure, his face. It was a countenance, which, to an artist who had to pourtray a saint or an apostle, would have been invaluable. His white hair was very thin and scanty, two or three light locks graced his high and polished temples, and the few faint wrinkles appeared scarcely the effect of time, for he did not seem to be more than sixty. Pressing the boy to his bosom, as strong feelings of parental affection arose, a few tears trickled down his

hardy cheeks, and took refuge in his venerable beard. The boy in return kissed him, and then springing away, like a young fawn, soon disappeared amongst the underwood.

When the boy was gone, the old man opened his scrip, and taking out a clean napkin, spread it upon the slab. He then brought out a small drinking horn, some cold meat, with bread and cheese, and a piece of plum-cake. These he placed in order upon the napkin, with a large clasp knife from his pocket, and a small Bible from his bosom; then wiping the dew from his forehead, and leaning upon the slab, he awaited in thoughtful silence the return of his son, for such was the boy who accompanied him. The figure and the scene were in unison, venerable but vigorous, sublime yet beautiful. The hoary rock and the hoary head, both had weathered many a wintry storm, and both appeared able to weather many another. The rock, however, in all probability, will remain when the *body* of the man shall be no more; but the rock

itself shall cease to be, when the *soul* of the man shall still be flourishing in youth. The boy quickly returned, bringing with him a handkerchief filled with nuts, crabs, and blackberries. These he laid upon the slab, and replenishing the horn with water from the bason, he seated himself beside his father, who, taking his child by the hand, prayed to God to bless the food of which they were going to partake, to their use and them to His service. The old man ate heartily, and young Henry (for that was the boy's name) followed his father's example with good success.

After they had finished their repast, and the old man had returned thanks, he gave the Bible to Henry, who opening it in the place where it was marked, read a chapter with an emphasis, which proved that he both understood it and delighted in it. Henry continued to read, but to himself, whilst his father sat for some time in silent meditation ; at length he took the hand of his son, and

pressing it to his bosom, in a tremulous accent, with tears stealing from his rayless eyes, he addressed him as follows:—"My dear child! the support of my declining years, the guide of my erring steps, the banisher of my sorrows, and the comforter of my age! May the God of mercies recompense thee for all thy filial attention to, and affection for, an old and helpless father! Thou wast thrown at thy birth into the lap of affliction; but I will not repine, it may be the greatest blessing that could have befallen thee. She is a rude nurse, my child, but her lessons are healthful to the soul. *I* never was rocked in her cradle, and *my* soul had well-nigh perished. But God, in his mercy, has since made me drink deep of the cup of sorrow, and thereby shewn me the error of my ways. This, my child, is thy birth-day: I have purposely come with thee to this place, that I might *here* acquaint thee with the history of thy father's life. At present thou art totally unacquainted with it." Here Henry's curiosity seemed to get the

better of those softer emotions which had brought tears into his bright blue eyes. He wiped the drops away before they fell, and turned up his lovely face towards his father's, with a look expressive of the most earnest attention.

The old man continued: "This beautiful, wide-spread domain, my Henry, *once was mine*;"—Henry's clear eyes sparkled with animation:—"and but for my thoughtless, folly and wickedness, would, in all probability, after my death, have been my child's."—Henry's countenance fell; he cast his eyes upon the ground, and seemed lost in meditation.—"I will not, however, repine at a loss which, I am persuaded, will prove to both of us the highest gain. I have learned that great riches neither confer happiness, nor promote piety. In scrambling with eagerness to gather these nuts and blackberries, you have had more enjoyment than I ever possessed in considering this large estate as my own." "Indeed, father,"

Henry replied, "I think that I have as much pleasure in admiring and running about this fine place, as I should have if it was mine."

"You have a great deal more, my child; every thing that you see delights you, you look about you only to seek for beauties, you discover them on every hand, and you are delighted with them: the owner on the contrary, in all probability, only looks round him to find blemishes and neglects; nor does he look in vain:—they teaze and vex him so much, that the beauties which he has seen over and over again, have no power to sooth him, and he returns home, with a ruffled temper, to scold and to find fault.

"I can declare from painful experience, that great possessions are not only the source of great troubles, but of temptations to wickedness. 'Hardly,' indeed, 'shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven.' '*I* trusted in uncertain riches, and I pierced myself through with many sorrows.' Let us not, however, my child,

lay the blame upon riches ; it is the human heart, which is so prone to evil, and so easily led astray, that is to blame. A man may have great possessions, and still not only remain a good man, but become a better man for them. Your grandfather, my dear boy, was an instance of this truth. The only property which he inherited was a very small paternal estate called Glenhill, where *you* see, but *I* cannot, a neat dwelling on a rising ground, in the vale, on the right, surrounded with hawthorns and a few large oaks. Being the second son, he was sent to London early in life, and was articled as a clerk to a merchant. He behaved so well, that he was taken into partnership. Success attended all his endeavours :—he neither prayed for nor coveted great possessions, and yet he became rich. I have often heard him say, that nothing alarmed him so much. He read and believed his Bible, and he feared that by his wealth he might be tempted beyond what he was able to bear. Often and earnestly did he pray to God, that if it was

his good pleasure to send him riches, he would, with them, give him a heart to use them to the promotion of God's glory, the benefit of his fellow-creatures, and the salvation of his own soul. His prayers were heard. Riches increased, but he set not his heart upon them. He however felt, that they were talents committed to his trust, and that it was his duty to improve them for the good of others. In this, as in almost every occurrence of his life, he was directed by that divine wisdom and heavenly light, which it was the wish and the endeavour of his whole life to obtain and to apply.

“ A very extensive tract of ground adjoining to his small paternal estate (which, by the death of his father and older brother, had become his own,) was to be disposed of. He purchased the whole. It was a rude and almost uncultivated wilderness; rugged in the extreme. Yet to his eye and mind, and early prepossessions, it had beauties and attractions which no other spot on the surface

of the globe could rival. He loved its mighty rocks, its pathless mountains, its gloomy dales, its wild heaths, its dashing waterfalls, its lonely glens, its gliding streams, and its wide-spread lakes. From a child attached to rural scenes and occupations, he submitted to a commercial life in a city, not from choice, but from a sense of duty, and he so submitted, that whilst he continued it, every one would have thought it to have been his choice. He, however, had not only a love of rural life and rural scenery, but he possessed a degree of taste in improving the latter, not often the property of citizens.

“ Here then, both from inclination, and with a view to usefulness, he concluded to take up his future abode ; he had partners to whom he had given shares of his business, after having served him faithfully as clerks, to whom he could leave, with confidence (subject to his own occasional inspection), the management of his commercial concerns.

“ In his retirement your grandfather first embellished in a suitable manner the little cottage in which he was born, and took up his abode in it. His family was not large; my mother and myself, with three servants, constituting the whole. The neighbouring inhabitants were as rude and uncultivated as the country itself in which they lived. With scarcely any human means of acquiring either learning or religious instruction, they were, as might be expected, a race little above savages. The first thing which my father did was to build the neat plain church, whose tower you see before you, with a comfortable parsonage-house adjoining, and a school upon the green, half way between the church and the village. He endowed all these with lands, which lie at the extremity of the estate, and which are now greatly improved and increased in value. He appointed a pious young man to be minister and school-master, and by persuasion and example he prevailed on every person in the neighbourhood, capable of getting so far, to attend

divine worship with regularity, and every child, of a suitable age, to go to the school. Those of the adults (by far the greater part of them) who could not read, he induced to frequent an evening school for instruction, twice in the week. Every family he furnished with a Bible and a Prayer Book. In process of time he built the whole of the village, which you may see so beautifully situated on the slope of the hill fronting the south, and called it Zoar. He erected and endowed that long row of neat almshouses near the church, with their little trim gardens in front, for twelve old men and the same number of aged females.

“ All this while the labouring poor were employed in improving the estate, and cultivating the lands. Every part was made as productive as the nature of it would permit, and yet every part was so disposed, to add to the loveliness of the scene, that a superficial spectator would have concluded that *picturesque effect* had been his *sole object*.

Last of all he founded the elegant structure which I before pointed out. It is larger than he had occasion or wished for. That, however, he thought necessary in some degree to correspond with the extent of the domain, and the magnitude of the surrounding objects. It was not then, however, nearly so magnificent as my folly afterwards made it. That mansion was, during his life, the abode of cheerfulness, hospitality, and charity, rarely of gaiety, never of folly and dissipation.

“Possessing, from nature, a vigorous body and active mind, my father was constantly employed. An early riser through life, and accustomed from his youth to method and punctuality, it astonished every one how much business he got through without any confusion or hurry. Nothing was to do twice, nothing after it was once done required altering. Before he begun any work, the whole of its parts and connections were clearly and fully arranged in his mind. He

never therefore appeared to hesitate, and the workmen, in every line, were surprised at the perspicuity of his conceptions, and the precision with which his orders were given. This vigilant attention to secular concerns by no means, however, diminished his regard to the interests of eternity. Religion was with him, not only an every *day* concern, but it was the concern of every moment. It was a principle implanted so deeply in his nature, that it was never absent from his mind, it pervaded and influenced every action of his life. Whether on 'Change, in his counting-house, or in his family; whether employed in the superintendence of his works, or in the deep retirement of his woods and mountains, he did 'all to the praise and glory of God.' This kept him from every dishonourable action; it checked every improper emotion, calmed his temper, purified his heart, and elevated his thoughts and affections above the trifling concerns of this vain and transitory scene. While his attention to an observer appeared all engrossed by earth

and earthly things, his love and his desires were in reality fixed on Heaven.

“He was fond of reading, but he thought more than he read. A pocket Testament was his constant companion. Devotion was not, with him, so much a duty as a delight. With strong feelings, and a tender heart, he was quick in discovering and relieving the afflictions of his fellow-creatures. He rejoiced in nothing of earthly felicity so much, as in seeing every one cheerful and happy around him. His humility (and no man was humbler) was seated in the heart; it was unobtrusive, and it called upon no man to look at and admire it. A portion of every morning and evening he invariably consecrated to meditation and devotion in secret. On the Sabbath day he was generally the first to enter, and the last to leave the church, not only to avoid ostentatious civility, but also to have time to arrange his mind before, and his thoughts after divine service.

“ Such, my dear child, was your grandfather : may you and I ‘ die the death of the righteous, and may *our* latter end be like *his* !’

“ I have thought it right to give you this short sketch of his character, not only to teach you to revere his memory, and imitate his example, but also to shew you that though worldly prosperity is not the most likely of any state to promote piety, yet that piety is not incompatible with it. He died when I was fourteen years old, leaving me, with only a fond mother to control me, heir of property apparently inexhaustible, and daily increasing. These circumstances will in a great measure serve to account for my subsequent misconduct.

“ I will not pain you and mortify myself, my dear child, with the recital of the errors, the failings, and the wicked follies of your father. Suffice it to say, that my conduct was the reverse of your grandfather’s. I had

never known, I had scarcely ever witnessed, adversity. I foolishly thought that the world had happiness to bestow, and that riches could purchase it. I tried every species of dissipation. I said I would rejoice and be merry, but I was miserable and sad. Thus I continued to live, sometimes in London, and sometimes here in the country, till the death of your grandmother, which happened when I was upwards of thirty years of age.

“ I had then exhausted every species of amusement, and tried every mode of life, which in this country promised enjoyment, and I was disgusted with them all. I therefore determined to travel into foreign lands, to try if *they* did not afford what I could not obtain at home. There I met with some new vices, as well as many old ones, with new faces and in new dresses ; but the fruits of all were the same, pain and weariness of body, satiety and remorse of mind. I however continued to travel from place to place for several years, till at length, in a small

town in Italy, I was taken so ill, that my life was despaired of. I was lodged at the time with a widow woman, of a very ancient and honourable family, then greatly reduced in circumstances, and thereby compelled to endeavour to obtain a living by letting lodgings to strangers. I lay a long time delirious under her roof. One day, when I in some degree first recovered my recollection, I cast my eyes upon what my disordered imagination fully conceived to be a blessed spirit from Heaven. It was your mother—she is now a blessed spirit there. At that time she was intent upon a book, which she held in her hand, and did not for some minutes perceive my notice of her, and my surprise, which shewed the return of my reason. When she did, she fervently thanked God, and retired. The old lady soon came in, and from her I learned that the vanished spirit was her daughter. I had never seen her whilst I continued well, but during the time that I remained delirious, her attention had, as I afterwards learned, been unceasing;

and I may perhaps attribute, under Providence, my recovery to that attention. Suffice it to say to you, my dear child, that when I did recover my health I could not tear myself from her company, but continued there a year, and at length we were married. She was a Roman Catholic. That, however, was to me a matter of indifference; on the other hand, my being a reputed Protestant, was with her and her friends a serious objection. She, however, as she afterwards told me, was fully persuaded that she should be a humble instrument of bringing me to a knowledge of the truth. I hope and believe that she has been so, though not exactly in point of form, to what she would then have considered as such.

“ She was, my child, a heavenly-minded woman. Well educated, possessed of a sound understanding and a lively imagination, she was of all human beings that I ever knew, the most gentle, meek, and humble. The example of her blessed Saviour

was ever before her mental eyes. She had no need of any sensible representation, (which, you know, Catholics make use of to strengthen the impression); she might, and I knew she did, sometimes, in secret make use of it, but it was, at any rate, with her, either to awaken or to warm devotion, unnecessary. Her heart overflowed with universal charity, and when she had resided in a Protestant country, had read more in the Holy Scriptures, and was left more at liberty to judge for herself, that truly Christian love and charity was increased. Her mother came over to England with us, and resided here for about two years, when she died.

“ I am pained and humbled, my dear Henry, to confess, that even the almost perfect example of your amiable mother had not power to reclaim me from the error of my ways. Nay, I take shame and compunction to myself when I say, that I basely, vilely abused her uncomplaining goodness. Never did she by word or ac-

tion, by look or gesture, reproach me. She was always gentle, generally cheerful. When I was most unreasonable, she endeavoured to indulge me ; nay, when she failed to sooth me, and sometimes drew from me even bitter reproaches, she never retorted, she never altered her sweet endearing conduct. She was indeed, my dear boy, a saint on earth. When I press thy dear hand, and listen to thy innocent prattle, I think, if I could see thee, I should behold the heavenly features of thy blessed mother."

Henry sobbed. The old man sobbed too—he clasped his child to his panting bosom, and for a while they were both silent. At length he continued :—"Thy mother, my child, has long been an inhabitant of those realms of peace, for which she was more fitted than for this turbulent world. She is happy! let us revere her memory, but not mourn for that which is her greatest gain. The poor in this neighbourhood will long remember her with gratitude and affection.

To them she was a sincere and useful friend: attentive to both their temporal and eternal interests, she was looked up to by them with love and reverence as a being of a superior order. Not because she assumed any self-consequence or dignity, but because, with true humility she appeared to descend from a higher station to feel and relieve their wants, with the most engaging and unaffected affability.

“ Throughout the year (when in health) she rose at five o’clock; two hours she always spent alone in her own room: that time, I know, was hallowed with devotion and meditation. She loved that season because it was undisturbed to herself, and unobtrusive to others; and, I am afraid, because she knew that seeing such religious exercises would vex and throw me into fits of passion, or at least of ill-humour. This neighbourhood, my child, in those days exhibited a scene such as is not often found on earth; with the exception of my own reprobate

conduct, all appeared purity and happiness. In one instance alone can I acquit myself of blame, and in that I can claim no merit, for it originated not in a good motive: I was not parsimonious; I denied her no pecuniary means which her extensive charities required; and till all resources failed, she had the unlimited command of my purse. Those resources however did fail, and they failed so effectually that the stream was not only dried up, but the spring itself became completely exhausted.

“ When my father died, he left me half the commercial concern in London. The other two partners had each of them a quarter. I paid no attention to the business; it prospered, and I received money whenever I wanted it. Both my partners, however, died nearly about the same time. I took in others, who had been long in the house as clerks, and who knew well the nature of the transactions—they, however, *knew me* likewise. The circumstances of the times caused great

and unavoidable losses. My partners found that the house was in difficulties. They were men of no good principles; they combined together, the credit of the house was unbounded, they collected immense property, and went off to America with it."

"The blow was as fatal as it was sudden. The whole of my possessions seemed greatly insufficient to discharge the debts. I found myself an outcast and a beggar. I was stunned by the blow, but I was determined to shew every body that I was superior to misfortune. It was a new situation; it was a stimulus to exertion; I confided *in my own strength*, and I determined to convince the world that I was a man, and an honest man. I gave up to my creditors all that I possessed, and with a few necessaries and the little ready cash which we had in the house, with my wife holding by my arm, I left the splendid mansion and the magnificent domains. I shed no tears. I gloried in a stoical indifference; and I even chid my

wife for being affected with the lamentations of all the poor who flocked around us, and impeded our progress by condolence and offers of assistance,—for the poor can be generous as well as grateful in their turn.

“ We took refuge among the mountains of Westmorland. I met with a little cottage in a retired cove near one of the lakes: a considerable village, in which was a church, was at no great distance. We had, before our arrival, exchanged our dresses for those of decent peasants; our cottage we furnished neatly, but as economically as might be. I uttered no complaints, indeed I spoke but little; it was not resignation but stubbornness: I got some work as a labourer, for I determined to be beholden to no man. I felt a kind of surly independence. I am afraid that I secretly in my heart reproached God. As to your mother, my dear Henry, she was all herself, and all angelic. She not only forbore to murmur, but she soothed, or attempted to sooth, all my sorrows, and

whatever were our circumstances, she always met me with a sweet smile, when prepared for my coming ; but I have frequently surprised her at prayers and in tears. On those occasions I was always sullen ; but she seemed not to observe it, and only redoubled her unobtrusive endeavours to please. In these, I am sorry to say, she rarely succeeded. Her early rising she still continued ; she knitted the coarse woollen stockings and mittens of the country,—an art which she had learned on visits to the poor : and now she contrived by this means not only to occupy her time usefully, but also to add considerably to our slender sources of subsistence.

“ For some months I thus went on, buffetting, rather than submitting to what I termed misfortune, and I thought I should conquer ; but the effort had been silently undermining my constitution, and a severe cold, caught at the commencement of winter, brought on a fever, which threatened to

terminate my existence on earth. It pleased God, however, to enable me to survive the disorder; but my frame was so emaciated, that it was many weeks before I could leave my bed. It was during this time that the unremitting attention, and cheerful submission of your most excellent mother, began to make some due impression upon my obdurate mind. Her unfeigned resignation to the will of Heaven; nay, her constant gratitude and thankfulness under these severe trials; above all, her tender affection for a husband, who had ruined and cruelly treated her, at length brought me (now that I was compelled to think,) to look upon her with astonishment and admiration. My callous mind was in some degree softened by the infirmity and affliction of my body, and I began to feel what I termed weakness, to which I had hitherto been a stranger. I even, at times, when I reflected upon my partner's virtuous sufferings, and thought that I was unobserved, shed tears. They seemed to relieve and do me good;

it was a new sensation, and I was almost inclined to be pleased with it.

“ One day when I was able to sit up, and had been more than usually impressed with these feelings, your mother left me, to take some work home which she had finished. In her absence, I cast my eyes upon a pamphlet that lay upon the table, in which she had been reading. As it was a small one, and I had nothing else to do, I took it up with a kind of listless indifference. The title startled me,—‘ THE SINNER CONVERTED.’ I read the introduction; I proceeded to the matter; I trembled, and read on: it referred me to the Scriptures as the source of light and life. I reached down the Bible, I could scarcely remember ever having it in my hands before since my father’s death: I was strongly agitated, I opened it at random, and the first words which caught my eyes were, ‘ *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is*

near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' I will not attempt, my dear child, to describe to you the astonishing sensation which these words produced. I felt as if I had heard *God* himself speaking to me. The words appeared to me as if purposely written for me. The whole of my misconduct rushed, like an overwhelming torrent, upon my mind: I perceived my own horrid wickedness, and God's merciful and abused goodness too forcibly for the emotion to be repressed. I threw myself involuntarily upon my knees; my tears flowed abundantly: I bewailed my transgressions, and I supplicated God's pardon with a sincerity and earnestness which carried me out of myself. In a moment, a tranquillity which I had never experienced in my life before, took possession of my breast: I felt as if an oppressive burden had been removed from off me; I became pleased with my condition,

and with all about me; I discovered that I had found a friend, with whom I had hitherto been unacquainted; a friend, who, I was assured, would never leave me nor forsake me.

“ I could then, in some degree, conceive how my amiable wife had been enabled to sustain all her severe trials with such unfailing patience and cheerfulness. Her transcendent merits, and my own cruelty to her, all rushed at once upon my mind. At that moment she opened the door. I was shedding tears in abundance: I sprung into her arms, I sobbed like an infant, whose alarms are subsiding on the bosom of its mother,— and when I could speak, I blessed and praised her, and told her, that *her* God should be *my* God, and *her* Lord and Master, *my* Lord and Master. That the Saviour who had died for her, had died for me also, and that I was then assured his blood had not been shed in vain *even for me*, dreadfully as I had transgressed. Your dear mother

wept for joy and tenderness, as she pressed me closely to her agitated bosom; then, suddenly dropping on her knees, she fervently and emphatically exclaimed, ‘O! my God and Saviour! I thank thee that I have been permitted to live to this hour! To see this hour has been my constant prayer! to see this hour have I alone desired to live! It is enough, O heavenly Father! and when it is thy good pleasure to call me hence, I am resigned to thy holy will. My beloved husband and myself shall now live together with thee for ever and ever.’ There was a solemnity in her manner that affected me exceedingly. She arose, and again embracing me, declared that it was the happiest moment of her life. I told her that I could make no promises; I felt so fully my own insufficiency and weakness, that I hoped never again to confide in my own resolutions and strength.

“From that time, my Bible and my Maria became my greatest earthly consolations. They were indeed inestimable ones.

Every day served more and more to convince me of my dreadful wickedness, I sought solitude to weep and confess my unparalleled depravity,—to supplicate God's mercy and forgiveness through the merits of that Saviour, who died to redeem such vile sinners as myself. Sometimes I seemed disposed to cry out, 'Oh! that God would require of me some *great thing*, that I might shew, by my obedience, that I was not utterly unmindful of his mercies,'—till the remembrance of my weakness and frailty rushed again upon my mind, and then I prayed that I might not be tempted above what I should be enabled to bear. With a contrite heart, bitterly did I bewail my unnumbered transgressions, and beseech God to grant me the assistance of his holy spirit to lead and keep me in the path of righteousness. Often did I experience sweet consolation and soothing assurances in my mind, which seemed to elevate me above the troubles and the cares of this sinful world, and introduce me, in some degree, into the world of blessed spirits in

endless happiness. I was become a new creature ; I had no desire but to serve God, and to evince a just sense of my own unworthiness. Yet frequently was I overpowered with a conviction of the heinousness of my sins, and a dread that I could not be deemed an object, defiled as I was, of divine grace and mercy. Despondency at those times sat heavy upon me. Tears and prayers, however, generally brought me relief ; and I felt convinced that the sufferings, the merits, and the intercession of the Son of God, were more than sufficient to atone for the transgressions of the chief of repentant sinners.

“ My dear and pure Maria was all happiness and gratitude. She was frequently weeping : but the tears which she now shed she was not solicitous to hide ; they were tears of bliss. I now looked upon her with sensations approaching to reverence. We every day became more and more endeared to each other. ‘ We took sweet counsel

together, and we walked to the house of God as friends;' for Maria, as she had no opportunity of attending a Catholic place of public worship, was constant in her appearance at our parish church. In all essentials, she said, we were agreed; and she could be well contented to retain her few peculiar sentiments of unessentials to herself, since the time would soon come, when they would all vanish before the effulgent glory of the God of purity and truth.

“Though I had now recovered from the fever, I was still too weak for any manual employment without doors. My Maria and myself, therefore, endeavoured to earn what we could within. Pride had now left me, and I rather felt happy in doing those useful things, of which before I should have been ashamed. With this conviction, I now thought it right to inform one of my principal creditors where I was, that if I had done wrong, or could be of any use to them, they might know where to find me. I soon

received an answer in return, lamenting, what he termed, my undeserved misfortunes, assuring me that all my creditors were greatly satisfied with my conduct, and that the product of my estates had already been very much beyond their expectations, so that they would lose but very little, if any thing. Many of them besides himself, he assured me, were desirous of testifying their sense of the propriety of my conduct, and their high respect for me. A fifty pound note was inclosed, of which he begged most earnestly that I would accept for the present from himself, as he was well assured I had occasion for it. This information afforded me considerable satisfaction and cause for gratitude. The present was seasonable; and I now felt no hesitation or humiliation in accepting it from him.

“ With the character of Urbanus, for that is the name of this friend, I must, my dear child, at some future time make you more fully acquainted. Suffice it at present to observe that he was, fifty years ago, a

young man who stood very high in the estimation of your grandfather. He was designed for the church. Whilst at college, he felt some scruples of conscience, with respect to subscribing to the thirty-nine articles. His friends were all strongly attached to the established church; he was a dutiful son, and an affectionate relative. He was modest and diffident of himself. It therefore gave him the most painful concern to disappoint the hopes of his friends, and to oppose his own opinion to the opinions of those, whose judgment he greatly revered. Long he deliberated, and long he hesitated, even till his health and his spirits were greatly impaired. The scruples which he felt were not, however, to be overcome, and he at last found himself called upon to declare them. This led to a change in his future designation, and he afterwards joined a friend of the same religious sentiments with himself, in business.

“Gentle and unassuming in his manners,

he conciliated the regard and affection of all who had any intimate connection with him. Your grandfather, notwithstanding he was perhaps a little too strenuously orthodox, loved this young man with the affection of a father, and I have often heard him speak of him with unqualified praise. He is at present one, whose modest demeanour attracts little of the attention of strangers. Placidly and quietly he pursues the even tenour of his way; he seems to do little, but he is always doing something, and that something is always *good*. He never *obtrudes* his peculiar religious tenets upon others, and but seldom talks about them out of the circle of his congregational friends. He does, however, always defend them publicly by his *life*, and when circumstances call upon him, by his *conversation*. I have, when young, frequently seen him, and always with pleasure, for he was particularly fond of the society of children. He is now an old man; but I am sure, Henry, when you see him,

you will admire and love him, and he will, I think, love you.

“ The year that your sweet mother, my dear boy, and myself now passed, I look back upon as the happiest of my life. We had then been married thirteen years, and had had no offspring. It was now evident that we were likely to have a child; and in little more than twelve months from the time that I became so sensible of my past errors, you, my dear child, were born. For some time your mother was likely to recover very well. Before the end of the month, however, she caught so severe a cold, that a violent fever was the consequence. The fever was removed, but a debility of frame followed, which soon became a confirmed consumption. She was fully convinced of her approaching dissolution. I flattered myself with hopes. She had none, or rather I think I may say, her hopes were that she should be called away. She had ob-

tained so clear and exalted a conception of a future state of blessedness, and had so confident a reliance on the merits of her Redeemer, and the power and goodness of her God, that she wished to be released from this state of trial, and feared not to entrust her husband and her child to Him who alone could bless them, even if she lived.

“During her illness the clergyman of the parish, whose name, you know, is Benevolus, having missed her at public worship, and learned the cause, called upon her. I was absent when he arrived, and met him coming out of the house in tears. He pressed my hand, exclaiming—‘Indeed, my good friend, (for so I must call you,) you have an angel for a wife! Whilst she lives, which I cannot flatter you by saying will be long in this world, I must request permission to call myself, and, if you please, bring my wife occasionally to see her. I mean less to call as a pastoral teacher, than as a humble learner. She is much better qualified for an instructor in

the road to Heaven than I am; nay, she is, I may say, already there. She is, I find, a Roman Catholic; she has indeed a truly catholic spirit, and would induce the adversaries of the adherents of that church to lessen their enmity towards them. I have from the first been convinced, that you were neither of you accustomed to that state of life, which your dress, employment, and humility bespeak. I have, from motives of delicacy, not only abstained from inquiring into a secret, which it was evident you did not wish to disclose, but I have even done violence to my inclination to visit you, till the illness of your wife made it my duty to do so.'—I thanked the good pastor, and assured him of my desire to be favoured with a continuance of his visits. From that time he seldom suffered a day to pass without calling either alone, or accompanied by his wife. They strove all in their power to serve us. He deserved and obtained my confidence. In two months from his first introduction to us, my dear Maria, your excellent mother,

was called to her exceeding great reward. She fell asleep, for it scarcely appeared like dying, so serenely and happily, with her hand laid on mine, did she depart.”—Henry bowed his head upon the slab; a tear or two trickled down the cheeks of his father, and for a few moments they both remained silent.

After the pause, the old man proceeded thus: “During one of the visits of our pastoral friend, your mother had, in the course of conversation, said to him, that had she been differently circumstanced, she should have wished, when she died, to have been laid near my good father in the church-yard of Zoar. No observations were made on the occasion, but before your mother’s interment, which I had left at his desire to the management of our friend, he had made all arrangements for taking her thither in a private manner. I went with him in his little carriage. He, by permission, read the service, and we returned without my being known. I returned, my child! but it was

to solitude ; to weep, but not to repine ; to pray, but not to lament ; to thank God, and submit with humble resignation till in His great mercy and in His good time he should see fit to terminate my sorrows.

“ My good friends did all they could to soften my affliction, but I declined complying with their proposal to reside with them. During your mother’s illness I learned to feed you ; you were now, in a great measure, my comfort and my employment ; I was fit for little else. O ! how good is God ! how does he lighten the trials of his servants ! Those, who with meekness bow to his chastisements, rarely are left without comfort, even from worldly circumstances. Nothing on earth could have afforded me the consolation, after the death of your dear mother, that your infantile society did. It was in every way calculated to solace and sooth me. I could indulge my sorrows, and have my own way, without putting you out of yours. Your playfulness, at times, diverted

me, and the care of you interested and occupied my heart and my hands. I remained too feeble for more laborious employment; besides that my eyes, which ever since my illness had been weak, were now become very dim, so as to prevent me from seeing very distinctly, and even seriously to threaten me with the total loss of sight. My worthy friend Benevolus was very attentive to me; I wanted for nothing which his care could supply, though I had no prospect of ever being able to repay his kindness. At length, when you were about three years old, I totally lost my sight.

“ The world would now have looked upon me as one of the most miserable of men. Reduced from almost unbounded affluence and power, revelling in luxury, and beloved by a most beautiful and affectionate wife, to a state not only of poverty, but even of beggary; and left, by the death of her who was fitted to solace every care, a solitary and forsaken being; reduced by a severe

indisposition to weakness requiring attentive care, yet myself obliged to be the nurse of helpless infancy; and at last, to crown all my other afflictions, totally deprived of sight! All this was true, and yet what was the result as to real enjoyment?—The fact was, that in that seemingly wretched and hopeless condition, I was, beyond all comparison, happier than when I was an object of envy to all around me. The seat of happiness is within; if she is banished thence, she will not often be found to hover without; my breast had formerly not been a fit habitation for her, it was defiled too much, and she fled from it. The affliction which I subsequently suffered, had cleansed and purified my heart, and happiness returned to take up her abode in it. Even those afflictions themselves were rendered in some degree a source of consolation. They convinced me that God had not forsaken me, for I felt assured that they were the chastisements of a Father, who correcteth every son whom he loveth. I

bowed to the rod, not only with submission, but with humble gratitude.

“ Now, more than ever, did I experience the blessing of your society; my strength and health fast returned, and you were already grown old enough, not only to amuse me with your innocent prattle, but to assist in directing and aiding me in my walks and all my necessary employments. I had taught you to read a little before I became blind, and it was now an easy and delightful task to improve you in it. Before you were four years old, you could read a chapter in the Bible very well. This was a circumstance that afforded me the most exquisite delight.

“ You were about five years of age, when my dear friend Benevolus called upon me with three reports of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*. I had never heard of it before; but from the animated account

which he gave me of it, I felt interested beyond measure. He left me the books. You began to read them: I devoured, as it were, their contents; I could scarcely prevail on myself not to weary you with reading them, and was almost induced for once to repine at the loss of sight. The contemplation of this subject was, indeed, a feast to my very soul: I saw the hand of the Almighty bringing glorious things to pass. I praised and magnified His name; and resolved, that if it was in my power, however feebly, I would aid the great design. I thought I saw His will beginning to ‘be done on earth as it is in Heaven.’ In spirit I beheld all nations enlightened by His blessed word, bowing down before Him in his earthly temples, and exerting themselves to pave the way for the everlasting kingdom of His dear Son. I seemed to feel His Holy Spirit enlivening and enlightening my understanding, elevating my hopes, and shewing me things such as eye hath not seen, ear heard, nor the heart of *man* conceived.

“ Long did I revolve in my mind what such a poor, feeble, blind old man as myself could do, to be in any way instrumental in furthering the holy design. I prayed for direction and assistance; and I recollected by what means I had myself been led to a perusal of the word that bringeth salvation, and I was assured that the same means might produce the same effects on others. I had since read more of the *religious tracts*, published by various societies, besides the one which produced, through God’s permission, so happy an influence upon me. Many of these I thought excellently calculated to arouse attention and produce inquiry, if not conviction. I therefore determined to get my friend Benevolus to send for a quantity of such as I should name to him, and resolved to make the experiment of taking a circuit once or twice a year to try to sell them, at the same time endeavouring to arouse the attention of all whom I could to the merits and importance of the Bible Society. By these means I should not only be em-

ploying myself usefully, but I should be easing my friend, in a great measure, 'of a burden with which I was sure I had no right to load him. You, I was fully persuaded, were capable of being my companion and guide, and would rather be amused than oppressed by it, as I purposed, in the first instance, to make it as easy as I could. I had some difficulty in obtaining my friend's consent. He however, in the end, fully acquiesced in the propriety of the plan.

“ After I lost my sight I had, for convenience, let my beard grow, and it was by this time become very long and bushy : I was beside so much altered in other respects, that I was convinced I should not be recognized even in Zoar. I felt my mind elevated with the anticipation of being so independently employed in such a good cause, in which I feared not obtaining considerable success. You were not, as you will recollect, one iota behind me in high spirits. My friend and myself agreed upon the route,

which he wrote down, one copy of which he kept. You could write a little, and, therefore, by your assistance we could correspond.

“ It is now just five years since, on a fine morning, we left our little cottage for the first time, our friend Benevolus taking the care of it during our absence, and accompanying us a few miles. We did not part without tears ; you shed a few, I believe, to keep us company, but your heart was glad. I was well acquainted with all the places which we had marked out to stop at on this first tour, I was therefore at no loss to direct you. You were, I recollect, very big in your office, and we attracted considerable attention. Our tracts sold faster than we had anticipated ; we had, however, arranged it so that I could get a fresh supply, and we made a very successful and productive journey. The interest excited by my description of the plan of the Bible Society was very great ; and I resolved, if permitted the

next year, to arrange measures for forming little subscription societies in the towns and villages which I should visit, whereby the poor might furnish themselves with the sacred Scriptures. The tracts which I sold would, I doubted not, pave the way for these.

“ To you, my dear child, it is unnecessary for me to relate how wonderfully the blessing of God hath prospered all our undertaking, or how it hath defended us from all harm and danger during the five years that we have thus wandered from place to place. Our adventures would form no inconsiderable, no uninteresting, no uninteresting narrative. We have found friends wherever we have gone, and our repeated visits never seemed unacceptable. The time hath not passed unenjoyed by either of us—I trust that it hath not passed unimproved. Our expenses have been of late so trifling, owing to the kindness of friends, that we have even been able to afford assistance to

many poorer than ourselves. Our dear friend at home has been *indeed* a friend. His reward is in Heaven, though he says, that he has been greatly more than recompensed here; and I can believe it, for I know his heart. Soon again I hope we shall meet to thank him.

“Henry, my dear boy!” the old man after a long pause continued, “attend to me. You have borne adversity nobly, or, perhaps, it has not been adversity to you; you have known no other station: are you armed with resolution, should circumstances require it, to bear a different lot equally well? Could you, my boy, like to change it?” Henry looked surprised, the colour in his cheeks heightened and faded.—“Indeed, father,” he cried, and the tears started in his eyes as he spoke, “indeed, father, I will never leave *you*.” “No, my child, my dear child! I did not mean that you should. I hope God will not long part us whilst I live; but if there was a prospect of our living without

the *necessity* of taking these journeys, could you consent to assist your father to continue to take them occasionally merely to do good; and would you still be as cheerful and humble as you have been?" The little boy replied, whilst an inquisitive look and smile animated his lovely face, down which the tears were still trickling,—“ I think so; but you know, father, that we are told to mistrust ourselves; I will, however, pray that I may be enabled to do it if necessary, but indeed I do not wish to be tried.”—“ I'll tell you why I asked the question, my boy. When we were last at home, I received information from my friend Urbanus, that circumstances of so favourable a nature had occurred abroad, that many of the debts which before were considered as bad were paid, and many others expected to be got; that it was now probable, not only that all the creditors would be paid in full, but that there would be a surplus. A few days ago I received a letter from Benevolus, which I got the friend at whose house we stopped

the night to read to me, as I did not wish then to let you into the secret. It was to say, that a large body of my creditors had met, and had requested him to inform me that there was a balance remaining of five thousand pounds, which they had invested in the funds in my name; that so satisfied were they with my conduct, that they had subscribed and purchased our old paternal estate, of which they begged my acceptance as a mark of their esteem; that the presentation to the living of Zoar was attached to the estate, and that it was now vacant by the death of the late incumbent. The names of the subscribers were not intended to be known."

Henry's eyes sparkled with delight as he fixed them upon the neat dwelling in the valley beneath. The rays of the setting sun illuminated the tops of the trees, now variegated with autumnal tints, and shone full upon the building, rendering it more than usually conspicuous. It, however, needed

not this additional charm to render it lovely in the eyes of young Henry.—“And shall we live at Glenhill?” he exclaimed, as he pressed the hand of his father. “I think it probable we shall; should you *like* to live there, Henry?”—“Oh! yes, I should indeed, father, if—” he paused.—“If what, my boy?”—“If Benevolus, and John, and William lived there.”—“Well then, my good boy, I am in hopes that Benevolus, and John, and William *will* live there, or very near to it. I told you that the presentation to the living was to be in my gift; it is much better than the one which our good friend Benevolus has at present, and I am in hopes that he will accept of it, and live there. I am the more disposed to think so, because he has expressed a strong desire that you should be educated for the church, and has offered to take upon himself the care of preparing you. Should you like, Henry, to be a clergyman?” Henry blushed.—“If I could be like Benevolus, I am sure that I should be very glad, because he does so much good, and every

body loves him so.”—“ It is, my dear boy! in hopes that you may, in a considerable degree, resemble Benevolus, that I am induced to listen to the proposal at all. For I do most solemnly assure you, that though, if I was to live so long, the gift of the living of Zoar on the death of Benevolus would again be mine, it should not be offered to you, unless I was fully convinced that you would discharge your duty in it with fidelity.

“ To devote you to the service of your Maker, were I sure of your being a faithful servant, would be the highest delight I could now enjoy on earth. It is the most awful, important, and responsible situation that man can hold on earth. On embarking in it, all worldly motives and worldly objects should be discarded; nothing should be suffered to influence the determination but the glory of God their Father, and Christ their Lord and Master. Pecuniary considerations in such a case, are insulting to the justice of Him whom they serve, for it is a groundless sus-

picion of His goodness. *He* never suffered his faithful servants to go unrewarded, but the time and way He has a right to appoint. No station on earth is so exalted as that of a faithful minister of the Gospel of Christ. No man is more despicably wicked than he who has solemnly devoted himself to the service of the sanctuary, and received from his fellow-creatures a pecuniary remuneration for his time, and yet betrays the trust reposed in him, and is unjust in his dealings, and faithless to his promises both to God and to man. It is an awful responsibility to which I shall be subjecting you, my dear boy! If I take this step, it will, I am persuaded, be from a conviction (after applying to the Fountain of all wisdom for the illumination of His Holy Spirit to direct me) that my doing so will redound to the glory of God, the salvation of men, and your own eternal happiness.

“ The station which God shall appoint for you in life is yet unknown to us, nor

ought we to be anxious about it. It is most important, that whatever it be, you should fill it righteously; that you should improve it to the best of your abilities and power, to the fulfilment of the purposes for which existence itself was given. All stations may be rendered honourable; all stations may be rendered useful. A few days ago, and a life of poverty appeared to be allotted to you. Had that been the case, I have long been assured that you would have been a faithful and useful servant of your Lord and Master. Now that it hath pleased Him to open other prospects to your view, and perhaps a more dangerous path, I still trust that you will walk in it with a perfect heart.

“The little history which I have been giving you of my past life, was not meant solely to gratify curiosity, but to afford you also salutary instruction. That instruction I will endeavour to point out to you, and I trust that you will lay it to heart.

“ Henry, my child ! ”—the old man continued, as he took and pressed his hand, the lovely boy sitting nearer to him, and reverentially looking up in his face—“ Henry, my dear child ! you have hitherto been a constant blessing to me ; you have indeed supplied whatever I have lost ; you have been a fortune ; you have been a companion ; you have been eyes to me ; you have been my instructor ! When you were about two years of age, you had been guilty of some little obstinate error, which appeared to me to require a degree of correction, which should make a lasting impression. I had never chastised you before. I fear that I was more angry with you than any man ought to be with such a child. I shook, and scolded, and beat you. You had never experienced any thing of the kind before ; you scarcely knew what to make of it ; you did not cry ; but you cast upon me a look of such incredulity, astonishment, and reproach, as struck me to the very soul. My heart was smitten ; I threw myself upon the ground

beside you ; I pressed you to my bosom, and wept over you, whilst, with an almost broken heart, I poured out my prayers to God, that I might never again have occasion to punish you. My prayers were heard : from that day to the present, you have never given me cause either to chastise or reprove you.

“Eight years since then have passed away : we have during all that time been constant companions, and you have been to me a never-failing source of consolation and delight. A poor old blind man seems to be but a very sorry associate for a lively child, but you have never, Henry, complained ; you have, on the contrary, always left your play with younger comrades, cheerfully to attend upon me. God reward thee, my boy, as thou hast been a blessing to thy poor blind father !”—Henry’s affectionate little heart appeared ready to break : he sobbed aloud as he exclaimed, “ Indeed, indeed, father ! I never wish for any body but you ; nobody is so good to me ; nobody loves me so well ;

nobody can instruct me as you do! and I would rather wander about with you all my life, selling Tracts and Bibles, than live in a fine house without you!" The old man tenderly embraced the boy, while the tears ran plentifully down his furrowed cheeks.

"Well, well, my child, I think after all we are best fitted for each other, and shall be some time before we shall be sufficiently reconciled to being parted, to be fit for other society. Time and habit, however, work wonders, but they will not soon make us forget each other. It is not, however, probable that you will in future be quite so much with me as you have been; therefore let me now again press upon you the advice which cannot be too often repeated—ever to keep in mind, be where you will, or with whom you may, that you are in the presence of God; and that He sees, and hears, and knows, whatever you do, or say, or think. To Him apply in all your difficulties and dangers, for the illumination and guiding in-

fluence of HIS HOLY SPIRIT, to preserve and direct you.

“ Henry, my dear ! you have read your Bible sufficiently to know that your blessed Redeemer and Saviour declared, that it was expedient to his disciples for Him to leave the world, that he might send the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, to abide with them and his faithful followers for ever. This Holy Spirit, this heavenly Comforter, this unerring Teacher, God has promised to give to all them that ask him ; and has said that He will lead them into all truth, and instruct them in all mysteries, *even in the deep things of God*. Never then, my dear boy, fail to ask for this precious gift ! You must, however, ask in faith, nothing doubting. Faith appears to be almost as essential in the suppliant, as power in him who is supplicated. Our Saviour declared to those on whom he had wrought his miracles, that it was *their faith* which had made them whole. Strange as it may appear to you, my child, there are

men, I believe good men, who read their Bible, and seriously reflect upon it, who yet deny the continuance of the operating influence of the Holy Spirit in and on the hearts of men.

“ It hath pleased God, my child, to deprive me of my sight ; you can discern the beauties of nature on every hand, above, beneath, and all around you ; you tell me how they charm, delight, and guide you in your way. I can, and I do believe you, because I have myself, formerly, experienced the same ; but if I had been blind from my birth, and you had still told me of this wonderful and useful faculty which you possess, I might deny that either you, or any body else, possessed it, and I might continue to grope my way in darkness, fully convinced, and asserting, that every one was as blind as myself. This might only be called stupid incredulity. But if an oculist of great fame, were to arrive and to make it known publicly, that he could and would cause

every blind man to see who would be at the trouble of only asking him so to do ; and if many, who had before been as blind as myself, assured me that they had been to him, and that they could now see as well as their neighbours ; if I still persisted in refusing the gift of sight, and in denying that any one *could* see, nobody would hesitate in declaring me to be *worse* than stupidly incredulous.

“ Such, however, appears to me the man who denies the operating influence of the Holy Spirit of God. God has declared that it shall only be given to them that ask for it. All who have properly asked for it, declare that they possess it, and yet these men continue still to disbelieve the declarations of both God and their fellow Christians, merely because *they* do not possess *that*, which it is impossible for them to have till they at least believe in its existence. Young as you are, Henry, this truth is not above your comprehension ; let it, my child,

make its due impression, and it will produce its never-failing blessed effects. Look not for this power strongly manifested to the senses, or always at the time discernible. Generally it is a still small voice, a gentle force, felt less during its operation, than perceived in its effects. Those who have never experienced it, may laugh at those who have; but those who have, must pity those who have not. I formerly should have been the first amongst the deriders, yet no one can be more fully convinced of the reality of its existence, and its blessed influence, than I now am. He who enjoys this conviction, is possessed of a greater treasure than any which this world can afford; and whether he be rich or poor, learned or illiterate, is comparatively of small importance. My own experience, my dear Henry, is a convincing proof, that without it riches cannot confer happiness; and that with it, the seemingly most abject state of poverty and wretchedness may be accompanied by cheerful content.

“ As far as outward circumstances are concerned, I am well assured, the *poor man* has the best chance of attaining true felicity here. The rich have more temptations to resist, and *those amongst them, who enjoy life the most, are they who voluntarily bring themselves the nearest to the state of the poor.* If the rich man would enjoy health, he must be abstemious; if he would be cheerful and enjoy sound repose, he must be active and industrious :—in short, he must abstain from all those luxuries in which his station tempts him to indulge, *and he will only be happy in proportion to the degree in which he can bring himself to resemble a poor man.*

“ That riches, however, are not totally incompatible with happiness in this world, the example of your grandfather will serve to prove; but then he was moderate, nay even abstemious, in his eating and drinking; he was diligent and constant in labours of various kinds, more than most poor men can be; he was humble, pious, and resigned.

In most things a poor man has it in his power to resemble him, without the temptation which he had to act differently. Happiness, therefore, is more likely to be the lot of the poor even in this world than of the rich.

“ Christian charity is a sentiment of the heart, greatly contributing to both temporal and eternal felicity. In proportion as we love our brethren, do we approach to the resemblance of divine perfection—for ‘*God is Love.*’ However you may differ in opinion on some points from your fellow Christians, never suffer that difference to induce you to withdraw either your love or assistance from them: never revile them, or their modes of faith. If they appear to you to err in essentials, pity them; and if proper opportunity occurs, endeavour to convince them of their error, but ever with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. You are not *sure* that they are wrong; leave then the

judgment to *Him*, who can and will judge righteous judgment.

“Towards no denomination of Christians hath the spirit of persecution amongst Protestants been so dreadfully excited as against Roman Catholics. The example of your angelic mother, my dear child, will serve to shew you, that purity of heart and conduct is not excluded even from amongst them; and that, though they are more attached to outward forms and ceremonies than we think right, they are not altogether so to the exclusion of that spiritual worship which Christianity so strongly, and almost exclusively, enforces. Love then all mankind as brethren; make all due allowances for their apparent failings and errors; and be severe only in judging yourself.

“Henry, my boy! you are attending to what I say; and will, I doubt not, let these observations make their due impression?”

The old man was silent, in expectation of Henry's replying in the affirmative; but Henry was silent too. The blood rushed warmly to the poor lad's face, but he gave no answer. The fact was, that when his father began his instructive lesson, Henry had been, as usual, (whenever the old man addressed him) respectfully attentive. *Glenhill*, however, again soon caught his eyes, and by degrees occupied a great part of his thoughts. At length, three boys returning from the village to that place, playing all their gambols by the way, absorbed his whole mind, and called up many a smile, as he watched their feats of light-hearted strength and agility; so that the latter part of his father's address was entirely lost upon him. "Henry, my boy!" the old man repeated, "are you attending to what I say?" "No! father," Henry replied, "I was not *just then* listening to you as I ought to have been; there are three boys playing about Glenhill, and I think one of them is Jemmy Thomson. I was watching them, and I

missed what you were then saying. The old man smiled. "Well, well, Henry! you don't often let your imagination run away with you from me, so upon this occasion I shall not be very severe with you. I think it may be as well to defer what I meant to say farther for a more convenient place and time. Perhaps, Henry, we had now better be travelling on towards Zoar: our friends there will be looking out for us as the evening is advancing. They will be much surprised, and I think pleased, to learn that the poor, blind, old man, to whom they have all on his visiting them, for these last five years, been so very kind, and to whom they have been so attentive, is their old *landlord*, and that he is again going to take up his abode amongst them. They had never any cause to complain of me in that character, and I think that they will not now either respect or love me the less for knowing who I am. Come, my boy, let us be going."

With a light heart, an animated counte-

nance, and the most agile movement, Henry obeyed his father's word of command to depart. They had just got amongst the whins and fern, when the old man said, "My dear boy, please to go your usual pace; you will walk me down." Henry blushed, and walked slower. "I am thinking," continued he, "that when we get to Zoar, you shall give a Tract to each of the children in——. "Oh, father!" Henry exclaimed, "if I have not left the Tracts behind me upon the seat!" The old man now laughed outright. "Well, you little hare-brained fellow, then do get back for them as fast as you can, while I sit here and recover my breath, of which you have almost deprived me by walking so fast." Henry was soon out of sight, and soon back again.

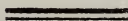
The sun had sunk behind Skiddaw, when the blind man and his son entered Zoar.

THE FOUR FRIENDS.

A FABLE.

THE FOUR FRIENDS.

A FABLE.



PART I.

THE frost was keen, the stars were bright,
The fire gave warmth, the candles light,
Four friends were met, in social chat
To canvass this, and censure that,
And shew the loss the state sustains
From not employing men with brains;
For ignorance it is that racks us,
Your men of parts would never tax us,
And *any* of these friends in *place*,
Had kept the nation from disgrace;

They proved that Commons, Peers, and Kings,
Were, after all, but useless things.

The union of the Church and State,
Gave rise to long and grave debate ;
Yet all agreed the ill-matched pair
Could never aught but monsters rear,
Wild through the realm to range and roar,
Or, tamed, within their stalls to snore.

With wine, which swam upon the table,
And in their heads, these friends are able
To trace the blunders of the war,
By NELSON made at *Trafalgar*,
And WELLINGTON at *Waterloo*,
Who crowed out ‘ Cock a doodle doo!’
Although to wisemen here, ’twas plain,
That chance alone the field did gain.
They next maintained that Billy Pitt,
Was for a financier unfit;

They owned the nation risen in glory,
But then, they said, her wings were gory,
Which made, so shocking was the sight,
Their squeamish stomachs sick outright.
'Twas true things turned out mighty well,
But who on earth the cause could tell?
To all it was a source of wonder,
Since blunder only followed blunder;
They trusted yet the times to see,
When something like consistency
Should guide the counsels of the state,
And men of sense alone be great.
They would not either cringe or plot,
And yet, they well knew *what was what*;
In short 'twas plain, each meant to tell,
He could himself do all things well.

Now by the gentle host's desire,
They form the circle round the fire.

“ Bless me, my friend,” cries Mr. R——,

“ What awkward creatures servants are.

’Tis quite enough a man to craze

To see a fire without a blaze,

So, if you’ll give me leave, my friend,

I’ll try my hand your fire to mend.”

Then with the poker, at a stroke,

The large coal he to pieces broke,

Which giving way, the smothering small

Slipt forward, and extinguished all

The little blaze.—His neighbour cries,

(’Twas Mr. M——,) “ Sir, you surprise

Me very much,—look here, admire,

And learn of *me* to mend a fire.”—

The poker from his friend he took,

And with a self-important look,

The bottom bars completely cleared ;

He then the shovel upward reared

Against the grate ; but as in spite,

It only served to hide the light,

Which he had placed it there to nurse,
In fact, the fire grew *worse and worse*.

Two having failed, up Mr. B—
Sedately rose,—“ now you shall see,
When judgment does with art unite,
They can, and will, set all things right.
This said, he straightway in the nook
The shovel placed,—the tongs then took,
And one by one, the coals upreared
So lightly, that it seemed he feared
That mortal like, those which were high
Would press too hard the lower fry,
Still he, like most of human kind
Who have at once two things to mind,
In doing one, forgot the other,
And all his care but caused a pothor.
For while the building was erected,
He the foundation had neglected,

That giving way, his work so nice
Was all demolished in a trice,
And hard and small together blended,
The fire made worse, instead of mended.

Some men there are whose powers more high
Ascend, to meet necessity ;
Who feel more certain of success,
When common mortals feel the less.
Such Mr. H——, the generous host,
Possessed of talents few can boast,
He long had marked with jealous eye,
A large broad shale, which flat did lie,
And stopt the current of the air ;
Of this resolved the fire to clear,
By gentle means at first he strove
The vile intruder to remove,
But 'twas too thick the bars to pass,
Too hard to break where then it was ;

Still undismayed, he persevered,
Nor danger saw, nor failure feared ;
The poker fixing firm and right,
He wrenched with all his main and might,
Out bounced the shale,—and with the same,
A load of glowing cinders came,
Which flew on every side about ;
—In short, the fire *itself* went out.

To MR. M.

At your request, my friend, thus I
The fable write ;—the moral you supply.

S. R.

THE FOUR FRIENDS.

A FABLE.

PART II.

Containing the Sequel, the Moral, and a Hint to the Reader.

To MR. R.

BLANK looked the friends at one another,

Each eager to accuse his brother ;

Then all at once by instinct cry,

“ Who did it ? ” “ Did it ? ’twasn’t I ! ”

“ Not you ? why did not you begin ? ”

Quoth M—— to R—— “ The fire was *in*,

But you must make a furious rout ;

Now see the end—the fire is *out* ! ”

“ Out,” answered R——, “ and so are you
In common sense and logic too
Who ever heard before this inning,
The end’s the same as the beginning?
What could ensue but ruination,
When you had sapp’d the whole foundation,
And B—— had built with curious care
A cob-coal-castle in the air,
Whose walls down toppled, such its brevity,
Not by their weight but by their levity!”

Here B—— broke out,—“ My cob-coal castle
Has fallen indeed,—so fell the Bastile;
But you first broke the round material,
And made me build in stile aërial,
Yet this I did with such ability,
It still had stood in fair fragility,
But chance,—was ever chance so scurvy?
Tumbled my Babel topsy-turvey;

Such luck would make a stoic sigh ;
The fire looked black,—and so did I ;
Yet both had brightened up anew,
If there had been no more ado ;
But H——, who always must be one,
When any good is to be done,
Smack through the grate the poker dashes,
And turns the whole to dust and ashes !”

“ Cease,” H— exclaimed, “ your idle sparring,
I only proved your mending *marring* ;
I brought you to my nice fire-side,
But you, when each his hand had tried,
Left not a spark of all the flame ;
And is not that a burning shame ?”

Thus H——, the meekest man you see,
And M—— who would not hurt a flea,

And R——, to all men's failings blind,
And B——, the kindest of his kind,
Sat round the black and smouldering grate
In skirmishes of keen debate ;
With eyes, mouths, faces, tongues, they fight,
And all were wrong, and all were right,
For each was right, so says my song,
In thinking all the rest were wrong.
And still so late they held that bout,
They talked the very candles out ;
Darkness and cold they never heeded,
For neither light nor fire they needed ;
Their breasts with noble ardour burned,
And flash for flash their brains returned,
Electrical as cats i'th' dark,
At every touch they gave a spark ;
And thus, like flint and steel's confiction,
Kept themselves warm with contradiction.

THE MORAL.

THE easiest thing beneath the sun
Is—to find fault with all that's done ;
The hardest, so perverse is man,
Is—to do *only* what he can.
The first position is so clear
From all we read, and all we hear,
And I might add,—from all we *say*,
That argument were thrown away
To prove it ;—'tis as plain a case,
As is the nose upon your face ;
Yet, like that nose, 'tis seldom seen,
Though fairly placed both eyes between ;
In fact it stands too near the sight,
Without a glass to see it right :
Now such a glass the fable is
To show this feature of your phiz :

The *first part* offers demonstration
Of man's fault-finding inclination ;
The poker proves position second,
—A truth not quite so obvious reckoned.

To what do men of parts aspire,
Whether in politics or fire,
In public or in private life,
In social converse or in strife,—
What is the point they all would gain ?
—Why,—*any* point they can't maintain !
They speak, and look, and stand, and go,
Do nothing,—every thing,—to shew
Less what they *can* than what they *cannot*,
Less what they have, than what they ha' not.
As each one's powers, in his own eyes,
Are twice at least their natural size,
So each would fain to others seem
As great as in his own esteem :

Thus the four wise ones in the fable,
To mend a fire were all unable,
Yet each in turn must needs fall to it,
And prove by *deeds* he could *not* do it :
Yet was there something in that case,
Each might have done, and done with grace :
What was it?—That may soon be shewn,
—He might have let the fire alone !
Ergo,—the hardest thing to man
Is—to do *only* what he can.



A HINT 'TO THE READER.

“ WHO were these four ? ”—with wondering eyes,
And scornful nose, the reader cries.
I'll tell you :—go into the street,
And catch the first three men you meet ;

Engage with them in hearty chat,
On any subject, this or that,
Or set yourselves on any work,
Then,—Christian, Pagan, Jew, or Turk,
I'll pledge these verses,—and no more,
You and the *three* will make the *four*.

J. M.

A WORD FOR THE GIPSIES.

A WORD FOR THE GIPSIES.

IN the early part of the fifteenth century, most of the countries of Europe were visited by an unknown people, whose appearance was most extraordinary and unaccountable. Their persons, their manners, and their language, were equally new and strange. Whence they came, why they came, and how they came, were alike perplexing. This astonishing people have continued to this day amongst us, unchanged in their features, their customs, and their speech. No European country is free from them; no one is overrun by them. With all people they in some degree assimilate, with none do they incorporate. By almost all they have in turn been persecuted, yet by none have they

been extirpated. In no country have they attempted to attain the supremacy; in none have they been reduced to bondage. Four hundred years, during which they have sojourned amongst us, have thrown little light upon either their origin or their destination. Their general dispersion, with the circumstance of their every where continuing a distinct people, is more astonishing (prophecy apart) than even the perpetuated and scattered condition of the Jews. There is nothing in their civil or religious institutions calculated to combine and keep them together separate from others. Nor is there any thing peculiarly repulsive in their persons or manners, which would not yield to the effects of intermixture; and yet I have not heard of one instance of a gipsy forsaking the tribe in which he was born. It would almost seem as if they were destined in the allwise, but often inscrutable dispensations of divine Providence, to the accomplishment of some peculiar and unknown purpose.

My attention has been this time more particularly drawn to the contemplation of the state and manners of this people, by a publication which has just appeared on the subject from the pen of an enlightened, persevering, and benevolent townsman, (Mr. John Hoyland, a member of the Society of Friends,) entitled, “ *An historical Survey of the Customs, Habits, and present State of the Gipsies.*” He has therein collected and concentrated much interesting information published by others on the subject, with a number of new facts illustrative of their present condition in these kingdoms. This he has done, principally, for the purpose of leading to the adoption of some measures calculated to advance them in the scale of human nature and of civil society. To assist in that endeavour is the object of this Letter.

In some respects I differ in opinion from the author of the *Historical Survey*; where that is the case, I shall freely state my rea-

sons for so doing. The most material difference between us is respecting their origin. He entertains no doubt of their being **SUDERS**;—people from the East, of the lowest of the four castes of the Hindoos. He conceives that they were driven to leave their native country by the conquests and cruelties of Timur Beg in the years 1408 and 1409. To this opinion there appear to me so many insuperable objections that I cannot bring myself to assent to it, though a long list of single words are adduced, the sound of which is, in both languages, nearly the same.

It is well known that the Suders are, and then were, one of the most abject, oppressed, and spiritless people on the face of the earth: held in abhorrence, and treated with contempt by all the other castes of their countrymen, their touch and even presence being considered as contaminating. Now, though it is possible that such people as this might be aroused by circumstances to resistance, and, if successful, to take dreadful

vengeance on their oppressors, it is scarcely possible to conceive that they would be the first to dread and to flee from a revolutionary conqueror. No change could render their condition more intolerable, *any* change might improve it. They were more likely to hail and join a conqueror as a deliverer, than to fly they knew not whither, to shun they knew not what. Besides, tens of thousands, at least, of these poor ignorant slaves, men, women, and children, must have instantly united and determined on pursuing one systematic plan of operations. They must have unanimously embarked in an attempt equally arduous and hopeless; the devising of which required a degree of geographical knowledge which few, even of the most learned of those times, possessed. This confused and heterogeneous multitude must have traversed together much more than two thousand miles, through populous kingdoms, where nothing but force of arms could obtain a passage, or procure them support. Through Persia, Arabia, and Egypt, they must thus have

fought their way; and when they had done that, they would arrive on the confines of the ocean. On that ocean they must have embarked to proceed—whither? To countries of which they could never have so much as heard the name.

Supposing them, however, resolved to risk the experiment, by what *means* were they to be enabled to effect it? Hundreds of vessels, solely appointed for the purpose, would have been barely sufficient to convey them. Where were such a number of vessels to be procured, how induced to volunteer their services, and how enabled to get provisioned? These are all obstacles which appear to me to be insurmountable. They are not however, by many, the only objections against the gipsies being Suders. Their dress, their genius, their manners, and their religion, all declare against the supposition.

The Suders, as has been remarked, were

accustomed abjectly to cringe before every other class of human beings, as creatures of an inferior order; submitting without resistance, nay without daring to complain, to the vilest offices and the most tyrannical treatment. The gipsies, on the contrary, have, from the first of their appearance in Europe, which was soon after the conquest of the Hindoos by Timur Beg, been distinguished by an untameable love of liberty, and an unconquerable spirit of independence. This it is that has continued them a free and distinct people through four hundred years, even in countries under the most despotic governments. This spirit has never forsaken them, and it is the foundation of all those peculiarities which so strongly distinguish them from every other people. To this the gipsies added, even from the first of their being known, a knowledge of the world and of human nature, which enabled them to take advantage of the follies and foibles of the different people amongst whom they went to reside. This the Suders could not

possibly possess. The gipsies appeared in tribes or hordes, some on horseback, some on foot, under different leaders or commanders, bearing the several titles of kings, dukes, lords, and counts; yet they were distinguished, at the same time, by a simplicity of manners, and a freedom from all ambition of conquest and desire of worldly gain, never before evinced by any whole people.

Their religion too was as new as their manners; like them it was simple and unobtrusive, equally unlike that of any Asiatic country from which they could have come, and that of any of the European states in which they had taken up their residence. It consisted, as far as is known, in the belief in, and acknowledgment of, *One* supreme, allwise, merciful, and overruling Providence. This is evinced by their constant declaration, that "*whatever is performed by God, is better than that which is done by man.*" They admit of no plurality of gods, nor had they ever any graven

images amongst them. This is a most singular trait in the religion of a pagan people in such a state, at such a period as that when they first appeared. All Europe was then involved in almost worse than Egyptian darkness; superstition and ignorance obscuring on every hand the light of truth. This circumstance alone seems to militate strongly against their being either Hindoos or Egyptians, the multiplicity of gods in both countries being notoriously great and absurd, probably beyond those of any other people. Is it then possible to conceive, that tens of thousands of idolatrous pagans should be all at once dispersed in different directions over Europe, and all in the course of their emigration not only forsake the gods and the religion of their fathers, but all of them adopt another, as dissimilar from that of their countrymen whom they had left, as from that of the several nations in which they were seeking to obtain a residence? This seems too improbable a supposition to be for a moment entertained. They besides

appear to have been totally unacquainted with any mode of expressing their ideas in writing, either alphabetically or hieroglyphically. This they could not all have been, had they come from either Egypt or Hindostan.

From whence then, it may again be asked, did they come, *why* did they come, and *how* did they come? To these questions I can only reply, that "*I cannot even surmise.*" They all, in every country, assert, that they came from Egypt. It is difficult to account for a tradition, on such a subject, being universal amongst them if not founded on fact, and yet, the circumstances opposed to it are so strong, as scarcely to admit of being removed. The plan hereafter recommended may perhaps serve, in some degree, to clear up the mystery.

We will now proceed to consider their character as exhibited amongst them at this time in Great Britain, which I believe will apply, with little variation, to those in all

other countries and at all other periods. They appear to me to be a people "more sinned against than sinning." Their merits have ever been kept from either expanding or showing themselves; their faults have ever been exaggerated and multiplied by prejudice and cruelty. We called them rogues and vagabonds, and we have done our best to make and to keep them such. The crimes for which they have generally been punished are those which are neither crimes in their eyes, nor probably in the eyes of God. They have been persecuted, and driven to prison, to banishment, and to death, for doing what they conceived to be their duty in that station of life in which it had pleased God to place them. Not for committing depredations on the property of their fellow-creatures, but for being harmless wandering vagrants. Every man's hand, as well as every man's tongue, has been against them. What they might have been, had they been treated with kindness in any country, it is difficult to say. They would

probably have become a very different people: unfortunately, however, that is an experiment which, during four hundred years, has never once been attempted. I will not admit of that made by order of the Empress Theresa in 1773 to be such; though she ordered the state to be at the expense of carrying off waggon loads of the children from the arms of their affectionate and distracted parents, to civilize and christianize them.

That a people so despised and persecuted by Christians, should reside for four centuries in christian countries without becoming Christians, is scarcely to be wondered at. What has been shown them of Christianity, has been any thing but lovely and enticing; what they have experienced of the mercy and justice of its professors, has been any thing but consoling and cheering. That they have not learned to shun the Christian religion, and hate its professors, after such sufferings from them, is the

most surprising. This they have not done ; to many of its rites they occasionally conform : with its professors they would, I believe, willingly live in peace and friendly communion.

There seems a steadiness in the manners and conduct of the gipsies, which keeps them alike from cringing and from presuming. They are a sedate and thoughtful people : there rarely appears any thing of levity in their conduct. Though they are fond of music, and are great practitioners on musical instruments, they are rarely, if ever, heard whistling or singing in that way, which bespeaks thoughtlessness or lightness of heart. It is not known that they have any original poetry in their native language. This, in a people so circumstanced, and of so contemplative a turn of mind, is, perhaps, a singular circumstance.

No people, I believe, so situated, ever possessed less, or were contented with less,

not only of the luxuries and comforts, but even of the necessities of life. Their habitations, their clothing, and their food, are alike simple, coarse, and scanty in the extreme. The very refuse and offal of what is consumed by others, even the dead carcases which they find by the way side, seem to satisfy them. Let them but enjoy unmolested their dear-loved liberty and independence amongst the wilds of nature, and they appear to set cold and hunger at defiance. It is this abstemiousness, so little known or practised by their traducers, which, more than any thing else, has contributed to brand them with the character of depredators. Christians cannot imagine it possible to submit so to live, without stealing to enable them to fare better: hence it is concluded, that the gipsies are what their calumniators feel *they* should be in their situation. Those near whom they take up their temporary abode, invariably acquit them of committing depredations upon their property; hence their enemies have been compelled to father

upon them all the trifling thefts, whether of bipeds or quadrupeds, in the neighbourhood, and they have usually been made the scape-goats for all the petty rogues within five miles of their little camp. It is therefore probable, that in nine instances out of ten, they are innocent of the crimes laid to their charge. This appears the more probable, from their being in so very few instances prosecuted for theft of any kind. Of their being capitally convicted, scarcely an instance occurs.

Those individuals who have been in the habit of treating them with kindness, and letting them reside unmolested in their out-houses or waste grounds, have always declared, that they considered them rather as protectors than destroyers of their property.

Their independent spirit keeps them from ever applying for parish relief; an example which it would be well for the country if more of their traducers would follow.

They are rarely, if ever, seen as common beggars in the public streets. On the late investigation which took place throughout London and Westminster, one solitary instance alone occurred, and that a doubtful one. The females, I believe, are very seldom found amongst those dreadful pests to society in large towns, the common prostitutes. Black women are not uncommon, but gipsies are exceedingly so. They are no midnight housebreakers, they are no highwaymen, they are no murderers; they are no common blasphemers of God's holy name. Some few occasions (such as weddings and burials) out of the question, they are neither addicted to revelling nor drunkenness. Their parental and filial affection are acknowledged to be exemplary; they will not correct their children, even on occasions which others think demand it, and they tend their old and helpless parents with a care and attention too seldom found in more polished society. They are susceptible to the most lively and lasting sense of gratitude. Where-

ever kindness has been shown to them by any individual, their affectionate gratitude seems scarcely to acknowledge any bounds. A very affecting instance of this feeling is related in the Historical Survey, in the case of the late Mr. Nesbit, of Roxburghshire, who was accustomed to call them his *body guards*. Whenever confidence is placed in them, they are scrupulously punctual in keeping their promises, but they will not bear being distrusted or dunned. They are accused of being revengeful; I have not, however, heard any instances of this authenticated.

It is urged against them, that they marry within the line of consanguinity, and that they sleep promiscuously together, under the cover of their little simple tent. To these accusations it may be replied in mitigation, that the first is the consequence of the state of the society to which they belong. It was the same in all societies in their in-

fancy, and it only becomes a crime when the state of that society is so advanced as to render the permission of such marriages inexpedient. As to the second practice, though apparently to us improper and indecent, it probably does not strike them as being any way indecorous; perhaps they sleep together in their clothes during the night, as innocently as they sit together in them during the day. Let us not then hastily condemn that which in them may be no crime. They are often accused of being idle. It does not, however, appear that they are in general disinclined to labour, but to please them, it must be of that kind which will not confine them to any one place, more particularly to a town; it must not encroach on their beloved liberty and independence. There are few trades which will accord with their wandering mode of life which some or other of them do not follow: even the females are most of them employed in selling different kinds of small

ware. That they are fortune-tellers is not so much to their discredit, as to that of those who encourage them in it.

They never intrude, if they can avoid it, on any private property. The open common, the wild heath, or the green lane, serve them for station and for pasture. The projecting rock, the high hedge, or the thick foliage of the forest tree, suffices to shelter their little frail tent from the fury of the storm. Their house, their bed, their cooking vessels, and their working tools, they carry with them, and a few dry sticks which they pick up serve them for fuel. Surely a people who can thus live, satisfied and contented though surrounded by luxury and profusion, are not, cannot be deserving of that abuse and contempt which the gipsies have in every age and country been exposed to. Nay much I fear, that many of those who thus hold them in abhorrence, and treat them with severity, are themselves far more despicable characters.

Look at the lower classes in the manufacturing districts ; see many of them when at work surly and dissatisfied with their employers and every thing around them, performing the labour which God has appointed as the lot of all men with unwillingness, as an unreasonable service. Hear them at almost every sentence cursing and blaspheming, calling on God to witness the truth of the grossest falsehoods, whilst in language the most profane and indecent they ridicule every thing that is sacred and chaste. Follow them to the alehouse, and hear all this repeated amidst the roar of drunkenness and debauchery : then, if you have sufficient curiosity and resolution, attend them home, to their wives and to their children ; but if you do, I must leave you, for I have seen them there—my heart sickens at the recollection, and I cannot pass their threshold. To turn from such a contemplation of this, to the simple crowded tent of the wandering gypsies, is a relief that comes like a reprieve to a condemned criminal. Who would not

after this, look with something like satisfaction into the habitation of these sons and daughters of rude nature, though perhaps the tempest howls around, and the snow drifts high against the side of their frail abode? Who would not now behold even this with pleasure, though assured that beneath that little dome, an aged matron, a father and a mother, with eight or ten children of different ages and sexes, lay crammed together on little more than the bare damp ground? I could fancy this, after thinking of the other, to be something like a family of love. For the life of me I cannot bring myself to despise them—I cannot persuade myself that the God of mercy beholds them with peculiar displeasure. They know, it is true, but little of *Him*; the wisest of us know not much. They, however, love to live surrounded by His works—and, more than any others in this country, they depend upon Him, with seeming confidence, for daily bread.

The great question arising from the consideration of the state and manners of this singular and interesting people is, "HOW CAN THEIR CONDITION BE IMPROVED, and how can they be advanced in the scale of human nature?" On this head too I must differ, in some respects, in opinion from the benevolent author of the *Historical Survey*. He proposes, that two or three of their children should be placed, with the consent of their parents, in each of the many charity schools with which this kingdom abounds. This I conceive not only impolitic but impossible. I object to it as parting, without necessity, the children entirely from the parents. Few of those parents, attached as they are to their offspring, would, I am persuaded, consent to the separation. Most of the children would, in all probability, ill brook the restraint of a school, while their parents were leading that rambling life which they all seem by instinct so much to prefer. Besides, nearly all the endowed schools are

parochial, debarred by their charters and regulations from admitting any children not belonging to the parish. *I think that we are not yet by any means sufficiently acquainted with the habits of the gipsy tribe, to determine what would be the best mode of ameliorating their condition.* This knowledge ought, in the first place, to be acquired. Nothing compulsory, at any rate, will do. The first steps should be to obtain their love, their gratitude, and their confidence. Let us convince them that we seek to serve them without wanting to molest them, and we shall, I am persuaded, soon render them sufficiently communicative. If the United or Moravian Brethren, were to appoint one or two intelligent, humble, and pious members of their society to devote the whole of their time and attention to the object, they would in the course of a year or two be able to direct us in the choice of means best adapted to render the gipsies pious Christians, and more useful members of society. Let their habits, their

manners, their sentiments, and their language be carefully studied; and let their prejudices and peculiarities be, as much as propriety will admit of, humoured and indulged, we shall soon then be able to determine how most effectually to serve them. Shew them Christianity as it is, the religion of love; shew them that it is, in its natural purity, opposed to that vile spirit of persecution with which its professors have hitherto pursued and afflicted them, and there is little fear but that many of them will soon learn to believe in and to love its Divine Founder, and to practise those holy duties which He has enjoined.

The means here recommended appear to be, in a peculiar manner, adapted to produce the desired effect. There are no two classes of people inhabiting this country (nor perhaps any other) more deserving of the consideration of the Christian philosopher than the Moravians and the gipsies. None are so little known, for none shun

notoriety so much. If the gipsies were to be converted to Christianity, from their habits they would appear most likely to join the Moravians: a retired simplicity of manners strongly distinguishes them both. The Moravians, therefore, on these accounts, seem to be by far the most likely to bring about the desired conversion of the gipsies. No one who knows any thing of the character and missionary labours of the Moravians, will for a moment conceive that they would be deterred, by fear of difficulties, from embarking in the cause. Joined to the simplicity of manners before mentioned, they possess a courageous, ardent, yet tempered and judicious zeal in the service of their Divine Master, not found, I am persuaded, in the same degree, at this time, amongst any other class of Christians. They have frequently pressed forwards, solicitous to be permitted, with their wives and little ones, to forsake the comforts of civilized society: to leave all which (but for the love they bear to their Redeemer's cause) would

be near and dear to them in this world ; to cast themselves on the mercy, and into the society of those who have hitherto been considered as downright savages, or little removed from such, with them to live, and, in all human probability, amongst them to die. This they have done, and are still doing, regardless alike whether it be under a burning sun amidst the scorching sands of Africa, or the pestilential gales of the West-India islands ; or, almost deprived of the rays of that luminary, on the frozen coasts of Greenland or Labradore. Nay, they have done more than this ; they have undauntedly, and voluntarily, forsaken liberty and home, with a full determination, if all other modes of obtaining leave to preach Christianity to benighted pagans in bondage should fail, to sell themselves *to become their fellow-slaves*. All this they have done : surely then no one will suspect them of shrinking from associating with the half civilized, half christianized gipsies ! They have succeeded, by the blessing of God, in converting thousands of

the poor despised Hottentots; let us not fear then but that, under the same divine direction, they will be at least as successful amongst the equally despised gipsies.

Christianity apart, curiosity itself, in this instance, will afford a strong stimulus to many to wish for, and to promote the attempt. It will, beyond doubt, throw considerable light on the manners of one of the most extraordinary tribes of men which ever inhabited this earth. By bringing us acquainted fully with their language, it may lead to the discovery of their origin, and elucidate the causes which have contributed to keep them, through all changes of circumstances, at all times, and in all countries, a distinct people, without any visible cause or known reason for their so continuing. It will, moreover, I am persuaded, serve to rescue a long and grievously injured people from much unmerited obloquy and reproach. Nay, I do feel some kind of expectation, that it may possibly convert

them into zealous propagators of the word and light of truth, amongst those nations of the earth still involved in the ignorance and darkness of heathenism. For such missions christianized gipsies appear fitted in a peculiar manner by their seemingly unconquerable propensity to, and love of, an erratic life. *Nay, it is possible, that this may be the purpose for which they have been designed by the allwise mysterious counsels of the Most High, and for which they have been, and still are, kept a distinct people amongst almost all the nations of the known world.*

THE GIPSY GIRL.

“ HENRY—the declining sun

Darting o’er the jackdaw crag,
Shews ’tis time thy work was done,
Come, my Henry, do not lag.

“ Bring thy spear, and bring thy line,

See the spotted trout at play ;
Bring that little net of mine,
Come, my Henry, come away.

“ Stop a moment—Helen, mind

That thy granny sits at ease ;
Take this string—that hazle bind,
See it stops both sun and breeze.

“ When thy mam and dad return,
Tell them we will soon be back ;
Mind that hearthcake does not burri—”

‘ What an everlasting clack !’

“ Don’t neglect that stir-about,
We shall have a treat to-night,
Half a score of rosy trout,
If the wild rogues will but bite.

“ Should dear little Tom awake,
Let him have his supper soon :
There, my Henry, freely take
This poor hand, thy promised boon.

“ Twice six happy years and one,
We’ve thus rambled side by side ;
When *another* year is gone,
Emma will be Henry’s bride

“ O, my love! I am so pleased—

’Tis delightful here to stray :

So—be quiet—I *won’t* be teased ;

Take you that, and get away.

“ What a happy life we lead,

Free to wander where we please,

Like the wild colts in the mead,

Like the squirrels in the trees.

“ God provides *us* all we want,

We on none but *Him* depend ;

Small imports what *man* can grant,

God himself the gipsy’s friend.

“ Henry—mark this spacious dome

Glowing with ten thousand dies ;

’Tis the gipsy’s splendid home,

Earthly buildings they despise.

“ What are palaces of kings ?

Can they boast of hues like these ?

Are *they* cooled with living springs ?

Are *they* canopied with trees ?

“ Have they curtains like the clouds,

Carpets formed of fragrant flowers ?

Have *they* choiresters in crouds,

Chanting wild in verdant bowers ?

“ What are all their glimmering rays,

Hung in spacious halls on high,

To the sun's meridian blaze,

Pour'd through all immensity ?

“ Ladies deck'd with jewels bright,

Cramped in carriages of state,

Are their steps like Emma's light ?

Are their hearts like hers elate ?

“ Though in silks and satins drest,
Through admiring crouds they whirl,
Henry—they’re not *half* so blest
As thy LITTLE GIPSY GIRL !”

THE END.

